Human Events *A Weekly Analysis for the American Citizen*
Editorial Office 1323 M STREET, WASHINGTON 5, D. C. *Telephone* NATIONAL 2066
VOL. IV, NO. 29, *Issue Number* 181, JULY 16, 1947 ★ *Editors:* FELIX MORLEY & FRANK C. HANIGHEN

FROM ILLUSIONS TO REALITIES

by William Henry Chamberlin

The longer I stayed in Europe, during an extended visit last year, the more I became convinced of the desirability of a thorough investigation of the Roosevelt Administration's political conduct of the late war. For, in country after country, I found that American military victory had been followed by American political frustration. And the course of post-war events increasingly exposes as disastrous illusion every main assumption on which this foreign policy was based.

It now seems high time to hold an inquest on the strange deaths of the Atlantic Charter and the Four Freedoms. These were American war aims, which received at least the formal acquiescence of our Allies. But they have proved to be a negation, not a blueprint, of the shape of things to come, both in Europe and in Asia.

Instead of freedom from want and from fear one finds destitution on a scale unknown since the Thirty Years' War. Almost everywhere there is haunting fear of a Third World War, sometimes varied by desperate hope that such a war will come. This hope is whispered among the millions of miserable people who have lost everything they had because of arbitrary territorial changes, accompanied by mass expulsions and the setting up of tyrannical dictatorships.

There is no freedom of press in the police-state. And the police-state is the rule, not the exception, in the large area of Europe behind the iron curtain. Freedom of religion has fared little better. Characteristic of the European new order are such developments as the forcible absorption of the Uniat into the Soviet Orthodox Church in Ruthenia and the widespread terrorizing of Catholic priests in Croatia and Slovenia, culminating in the arrest and sentencing to a long term in prison of Archbishop Aloysius Stepinats, of Zagreb.

Let us recall the first three clauses of the Atlantic Charter:

> "First, their countries seek no aggrandizement, territorial or other;
>
> "Second, they desire to see no territorial changes that do not accord with the freely expressed wishes of the peoples concerned;

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"Third, they respect the right of all peoples to choose the form of government under which they will live; and they wish to see sovereign rights and self-government restored to those who have been forcibly deprived of them."

Tell that to the million and more people who were deported from Eastern Poland to the Soviet Union, those of them who have survived the ordeal of transportation in cattle-cars and subsequent slave-labor! Tell that to the hundreds of thousands of Poles, Letts, Lithuanians, Estonians, Ukrainians, Yugoslavs, Russians who have been dispersed as fugitives all over Europe! Tell that to the Germans who formerly lived in East Prussia and the territory between the Oder-Neisse border and the former German frontier -- to those of them who are still alive as beggared refugees after undergoing orgies of pillage, rape and murder!

II

Our foreign policy during the war was largely in the hands of ungifted amateurs who seem to have made the gravest international decisions on much the same basis of hunches, or perhaps lucky numbers, which, we are told, determined financial policy in the early years of the New Deal. Four principal assumptions on which American wartime diplomacy was based have proved to be costly mistakes. These were:

(1) That Russia, after a victorious war, would be a co-operative do-gooder or, at least, a passive factor in the international scene. It was assumed, with truly amazing naivete, that Soviet foreign policy would continue to be restrained when every element of check and balance in Europe and Asia had been smashed.

(2) That the way to "get along" with Stalin was to give him everything for which he asked. Curiously enough, the advocates of this policy were often the most violent critics of concessions to Hitler. The aftermath of the Yalta and Potsdam Agreements proves that an appeasement policy is always in the red, because it is invariably interpreted by a dictatorship as an invitation to new aggression.

(3) That Germany was the sole source of international evil, past, present and to come; that no country except Germany had waged an aggressive war in the past or would wage one in the future. This highly emotional judgment overlooked the historical evidence that the strongest military nation in Europe habitually yields to the temptation to abuse its power. It was childish oversimplification to confront the problem of aggressive war with a crude formula for destroying Germany.

From a practical standpoint this assumption that only Germany could be an aggressor was extremely harmful. For it discouraged any attempt to come to an agreement with the forces in Germany which, as first told in this country by HUMAN EVENTS, were working for the overthrow of

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Hitler's dictatorship. How much more hopeful the outlook would be if, instead of a destitute, broken, divided Germany, we could today deal with a united Western-oriented Germany, under the leadership of the men who took part in the anti-Nazi rising of July 20, 1944.

(4) That America could completely destroy the balance of power in Europe without, as a sequel, facing a bitter choice of alternatives. These alternatives are either to throw America's full weight into the scales to help create a new balance of power, or else to watch all of Europe slide bit by bit into dependence on the single strong land Power which existed at the end of the war, namely the Soviet Union. Whichever horn of this dilemma is chosen, the result will be continuous nervous tension and unprecedented drain on our national resources.

III

Some future historian may well devote considerable time and research to finding a plausible answer to a baffling question: Why did Franklin Delano Roosevelt, disposing of the greatest concentration of combined air, naval and mechanized land power ever assembled, nevertheless make such an amazingly poor showing in translating his own professed ideals into accomplishment?

The treaties concluded after the First World War were subjected to severe and, in some degree, justified criticism. It was a wisecrack of 1919 that Wilson should have received the Nobel Prize for mathematics, because he had made fourteen equal zero. But the gap between the Fourteen Points and the Treaty of Versailles was far less formidable than the yawning chasm between the Atlantic Charter and the Four Freedoms, on the one hand, and the present European shambles, on the other.

Our future historian may find a clue in a remark once made to me by a journalist of national reputation and long and ripe experience.

> "Roosevelt never takes any interest in matching deeds with words, performance with promise. His reaction is that of an actor. If a slogan, a phrase, a set of principles serves the immediate purpose of arousing a favorable reaction he is not much concerned with its future implementation."

IV

A good illustration of the schism between phrase and deed that marked the Roosevelt foreign policy was the attitude toward "one world." If you did not accept without reservations the bland assumption that we are living in a world of "United Nations" you were a fascist, a reactionary, an advocate of "no world."

Yet the definitive pre-peace arrangements in which the Roosevelt Administration acquiesced were most distinctly calculated to make not for one world, but for two worlds. This was accomplished by under-

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writing exclusive Soviet spheres of interest in various parts of Europe and Asia. There was never any serious attempt to obtain the realization of the pledges of joint Three-Power action "in assisting the peoples liberated from the domination of Nazi Germany and the peoples of the former Axis satellite states in Europe to solve by democratic means their pressing political and economic problems," to quote the language of the Yalta Declaration.

American efforts to maintain the principle of the political and economic unity of occupied Germany were feeble and halfhearted. "Liberated" Korea was slashed into two parts by a demarcation line along a wholly unnatural frontier. In order to obtain wholly unnecessary Soviet participation in the war against Japan, railway and harbor concessions that fairly reeked with old-fashioned imperialist odor were made to the Soviet Union in Manchuria at China's expense.

Wars are apt to inspire hallucinations and half-truths. A good example of pure hallucination was Mr. Henry Wallace's amazing declaration that the late war was being fought so that everyone in the world could have a quart of milk a day. To anyone who has seen the post-war European Continent this "quart of milk a day" interpretation of the late conflict is heartbreaking irony.

The late Wendell Willkie gave nationwide publicity to the phrase "One World." This idea is perhaps more dangerous than a downright hallucination, because it is a half-truth. Science and technology have indeed diminished space and distance and made countries more vulnerable to atomic bombs and to ideas.

Unfortunately, side by side with the advance of a scientific invention, which should make for greater global unity, there has been a parallel growth of totalitarian practices. These surround large areas of the globe with Chinese Walls of deliberate thought control and censorship. There was a far freer circulation of ideas in the Europe of 1913, without benefit of airplane and radio, than in the Europe of 1947.

Now we must, for the time being, abandon the pleasant illusion of one world for the hard reality of two worlds. We must forget the illusion of an eternal wartime alliance and face the reality of a new and grim international alignment. We must replace the illusion that appeasement could be successful with realistic recognition that a firm stand is essential to preserve the basic principles of freedom.

To awaken from illusion to reality, and in time, is the primary necessity of our foreign policy.

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Not Merely Gossip *A Supplement to* Human Events VOL. IV, NO. 29

By Frank C. Hanighen July 16, 1947

It is easier to discover what the "Marshall plan" is not than what the "Marshall plan" is. First of all, there exists no "Marshall plan," if a detailed blueprint of American aid to Europe is meant. There is a Marshall proposal that European nations determine how much they can supply for the rehabilitation of Europe and how much they must seek in addition from the U. S. When and if the Paris conferees reach agreement on these matters for non-Soviet Europe (possibly about September 1), then the Administration will presumably estimate how much European aid we can afford; in accordance with the findings of the President's commission, if not of Senator Vandenberg's committee. Then and only then, will the Marshall proposal become a "plan," on which Congress will presumably be summoned to pass.

Meanwhile the international air is filled with other confusions of terms. Molotov has warned that the "Marshall plan" will destroy the "sovereignty" of participating European nations. Bidault and other Western leaders deny this. It is quite unlikely that there will be any "destruction" of sovereignty, as the Russians understand the term. No Western GPU will sit in the chancelleries of small nations; no minority parties will be wiped out; no civil liberties or individual rights will be infringed. But it would be folly to deny that some measure of sovereignty will have to be surrendered in the attempt to co-ordinate European economies, one of the professed purposes of the Conference. Commercial and financial pacts, and tariff barriers of the various nations will obviously have to be modified, if the plans considered at Paris are to enjoy some success.

The Soviet charge that the United States seeks to intervene -- under the "Marshall plan" -- in the domestic affairs of European countries is similarly interesting. Of course, the United States will not dictate the rise and fall of ministries, nor specify what parties should hold what posts (a common Soviet practice). But to believe that the United States, which is expected to pay the bill, will self-effacingly abstain from exerting "pressure" on the governments of various countries when it comes to crucial issues is hardly realistic. American pressure was reportedly applied during the Paris Conference. And today in Washington, governmental circles discuss not the propriety of applying pressure, but how best to do it.

Of course, the ghost at the Paris feast -- rarely mentioned, rarely mentionable by the West, but often by Russia -- is Germany. When and if the Marshall proposal becomes a plan, it will in large part be a project to rehabilitate Germany, and thereby all of Europe. A new directive for General Clay, superseding the infamous JC 1067 (nub of the Morgenthau plan) shows how the wind is blowing. A Washington official told us the following story to illustrate the problem. It seems that several thousand tractors -- made in Germany -- lie idle in Italy for lack of parts, with a resultant lag in food production. It was proposed that brand new tractors be purchased in the United States, thereby raising the price of this essential machinery for our own farmers. But, obviously, if German industry were again set going, the tractor parts could be readily supplied without drawing on America.

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The delays which may attend the Paris effort to work out economic co-ordination may be seen in the progress of Benelux, (the projected economic union of BElgium, the NEtherlands and LUXemburg). After many months of negotiations, representatives of the governments reached agreement on a new customs tariff, drawn up according to a plan produced by the League of Nations in 1937. The next step is to co-ordinate excise and transit charges; the third, and final, to integrate the economies of the

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three little nations. Only the first step has been taken. Negotiations for excise and transit are scheduled to start next September. But, according to the London Economist (May 31), there is no early prospect of achieving the third; the most difficult and important. Little progress, says the Economist, has been reported in the field of co-ordination of agricultural and industrial development. If the pace is not stepped up, it will be five years before this final stage is reached. "Meanwhile," remarks the London periodical, "industrial conditions are crystallizing in Western Europe and opportunities to create new industries -- arising from the weakness of Germany -- may be lost."

However, the desire for union is widespread in all three countries. Industrial and financial circles back it and so do most of the public. Gallup polls on the question show big majorities in favor of the scheme. The slowness of progress is said to have had no dampening effect on the zeal of supporters. But it is recognized that the biggest obstacle to Benelux lies in the differing domestic policies of Holland and Belgium; strong state intervention in business in the former; "qualified liberalism" in the latter.

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General A. C. Wedemeyer has left on a "fact finding" mission to China and Korea at the request of President Truman. The President's action is a confession of failure, as is the coming exile of John Carter Vincent, pro-Soviet head of the State Department's China desk, to Switzerland. Both Truman and Marshall had long hewed to the Vincent line that both sides in China -- the Nationalist Government and the Communist rebels -- should be brought together in one government, assuming that this would establish peace and eliminate civil strife; with a united China as a result. General Wedemeyer from the beginning criticized the Truman-Marshall policy as impracticable. He believed that the Communists could not be trusted to work faithfully within any coalition government, and that the outcome of the appeasement policy would be more civil strife.

Wedemeyer advocated planned and limited aid to China. The General thought that aid should be concentrated on one area, the northern provinces between the Yellow River and Manchurian border, where abundant raw materials provide the basis for development of a natural industrial nucleus. If this were achieved, the benefits would in time flow to the rest of the country. Additionally, he believed that such aid should be used under strict American technical supervision. Wedemeyer, it is said, has not changed his ideas.

On his return in two months, the General is not likely to render an optimistic report to the President. Chiang's position is regarded as so difficult that a general debacle is not impossible. Wedemeyer's presence in China -- where he is known as a firm friend of the Generalissimo -- may be a tonic for the Nationalists. But few observers of the Far Eastern scene anticipate that Wedemeyer can do more than merely try to salvage as much as possible out of what is obviously a wreck. Such a salvage operation, it is warned, may involve sacrifice of much Nationalist territory, in order to preserve a defendable nucleus. It may involve the withdrawal of Nationalist forces from Manchuria, the surrender of this area to Russia or a Russian puppet regime -- a bitter tea indeed for an Administration which fought a war with Japan to ensure Chinese possession of that rich area.

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The World Bank on July 15 offered its first issues of bonds, in the amount of $250,000,000. The bonds were over-subscribed and sold at a premium on the Exchange. The start seems auspicious.

After much delay, the Bank finally got under way with the appointment of Mr. J. J. McCloy, formerly Assistant Secretary of War, as President. McCloy and his

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team of assistants have carried on a strong "sell-the-Bank" drive, designed to convince banks and insurance companies of the soundness of the institution. Apparently they have swayed many doubters. However, what hard-boiled investors keep in mind is that behind the present issue of $250,000,000 stands a U. S. Government guarantee to provide capital of $3,750,000,000.

It is a bit ironical that one day in recent weeks, when papers gave the Bank issue much publicity, the same papers ran ads by the Peruvian Government, offering to unhappy holders of the defaulted 1931 loans an "adjustment" which would involve resumed interest payments on a much lower rate. No provision is made for payment of defaulted interest payments. Brazil has also recently effected an adjustment. As for such calamities as the Greek 7's of 1964, there reigns discreet silence.

In the old days, in other words, investors took their individual chances with the finances of second-grade foreign governments. Now they are taking chances on the assumption (not justified by the Bank statute) that our government will guarantee their investments if the foreigner goes bankrupt again.

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George Morgenstern's Pearl Harbor: The Story of the Secret War reportedly is enjoying a brisk sale, six months after publication. For long, it was on the Herald Tribune list of non-fiction best-sellers. The record was achieved despite the fact that the literary reviews and most of the book columnists either ignored or slighted the book. Not so with the American Journal of International Law which (April, 1947) has a review by Professor Edwin Borchard of Yale. We quote the concluding paragraph:

"Either Mr. Morgenstern is blazing a false trail, or else the war was planned by American officials who deceived their countrymen by making Messrs. Kimmel and Short scapegoats for Washington officials. The evidence must be refuted or conviction stands. Two things, nevertheless, are plain: sanctions mean war and the term 'aggressor' is worthless because chameleonic. This book should be read carefully by every person who does not identify bellicosity with patriotism. The author, a Chicago newspaperman, knowing the sensational character of this story, has fortified himself by citations from original sources. It is now the work of the defenders of the official saga to refute his citations and quotations."

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One of the most appalling aspects of the German picture is rarely described in reports from American and British zones. A medical subscriber sends us a censored letter from a distinguished German physician in the British zone stating: "I am a member of the central committee to fight tuberculosis in the British and American zones. In the British zone alone there are 11,000 people with open contagious t.b. living with members of their family in the same room. There are altogether 46,000 cases of open contagious tuberculosis. In the British zone there are known to be 250,000 cases of t.b. and we have only 12,000 hospital beds available for them

"T.b. is our most pressing problem. It is not as alarming as the grippe epidemic but there is no question that the situation will get out of control if we are not able in the very near future to isolate at least the open contagious cases by placing the victims in hospitals. Furthermore, it is essential to have all t.b. cases pass through an X-ray investigation to determine the number of contagious cases. But for this special purpose we lack practically everything. We should have standardized hospitals made of timber, but there is no timber. We have neither beds, nor mattresses, nor bedding, nor forks, nor spoons, nor plates, nor cups, nor furniture of any kind. There are no tables and chairs for the hospitals which we should have and the worst of all we are lacking the necessary X-ray installations."

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Book Events

Hitler in Uns Selbst, by Max Picard

Zurich: Eugen Rentsch. 1946.

The phenomenon of Hitlerism can be regarded in two quite different ways: as a peculiarly German development and therefore now primarily of only historical interest, or as the result of a general crisis of our civilization. If one accepts this latter view, then Nazism must be regarded as a terrible warning. This standpoint is taken in the most recent book of the Swiss writer, Max Picard, Hitler in Uns Selbst.

Picard considers Nazism from one standpoint only, as a phenomenon resulting from a specific moral and spiritual situation. While this concentration on the philosophical aspects of the problem makes his study somewhat one-sided, it adds greatly to its force and gives it an almost universal validity, because it points an unerring and accusing finger at the fundamental disease of our civilization. Picard analyzes Nazism as the consequence of the spiritual chaos of modern man, a chaos in which continuity has been destroyed, in which values have become meaningless, in which the individual has been reduced to a nullity. Hitler did not need to conquer such a world -- he found it already conquered for him. It is a world without order, without a hierarchy of values, a world which lives only for the moment, in which there can be no evolutionary development nor organic growth, only mass production. Nazism carried these aspects of modern life to their terrible and final conclusion. The partial discontinuity, like everything else, was made total, and by making it complete, Hitler made it seem logical and permanent.

Picard holds up many aspects of modern life to demonstrate his thesis of discontinuity; one of the most striking is the example of the radio. The chaos of a modern illustrated magazine, with an article, say, on Thomas Aquinas next to a photograph of a movie actress is, as Picard puts it, "old-fashioned, almost handmade," compared to the radio. In the latter "the business of discontinuity has become mechanized." The radio, with its continuity of noise, provides a substitute for the lack of inner continuity of modern man. But it does more than gather together, it gives the impression not only that it perceives for the individual, but that it also creates. Things become real only as they are reported by the radio -- it perceives and judges, the soul of modern man becomes tied to it. "With such an apparatus it was easy for Hitler to shape the existence of the individual after his own image."

There are chapters on many phases of the chaos into which Picard feels modern civilization has degenerated. He speaks of the effect of industrialism on the individual; of "the degradation of the word into the slogan"; of the destruction of the community; of the guilt of education; of art; of the flight from Christianity. While the book takes Hitlerism as its focal point, it must be read not objectively, as applying only to Germans, but subjectively, as being concerned with a crisis of Western civilization, in which all of us are directly involved.

Hitler in Ourselves is a book which could only have been written by a European, by a man who was close to the whole terrible tragedy of Nazism, not only as it developed after 1933, but in its beginnings in the cultural crisis of Germany and Europe. It is the warning, in a very real sense, of a prophet; we would do well, in this country, to take it seriously. -- Henry Regnery

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Henry Regnery is editor of the HUMAN EVENTS Pamphlet series. Hitler in Ourselves is announced for early publication in an English translation under the imprint of HUMAN EVENTS ASSOCIATES, 608 S. Dearborn Street, Chicago 5, Illinois.

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